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Effect of technical support and trust on the adoption of electronic human resource management: Evidence from developing countries

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Abstract
The purpose of the study is to analyzing those factors that are impacting upon the adoption of E-HRM (Electronic Human Resource Management). The respondents of the study were 288 employees from the universities. Researcher has adopted the questionnaire through the literature and taken the responses adequately from the employees of University. This research model has been designed in the context of acceptance and determines the change in behavior towards adopting the EHRM in Universities along with the impact of increased technical assistance and trust on EHRM in Universities. This model is helpful in determining the impact of different features such as; ease of use, usefulness, trust and technical support on behavior towards the EHRM in Universities. The outside factors of the model are Technical support or assistance and trust. This study extends the Technology Acceptance Model. The study results suggest that two factors are major that are technical support and trust impacting upon the ease of use and usefulness; along with this impact of ease of use and usefulness is upon the attitude and the impact of attitude is upon the adoption of E-HRM in universities. The study also discusses the certain limtations and provides recommendation for the stakeholders.

Keywords: Effect of technical support, adoption, electronic human

Introduction

Universities are become advanced in order to utilize the technology for the purpose of communication and providing the services therefore, it enable them to get the competitive edge over others in the industry(Amuna *et al*, 2017) [1, 3, 17]. IT has enabled the human resource in the organization different features that helps them to analyze and support the organizational operations and meeting the strategic objectives as well. It is evident that technology has embedded in the organization therefore, electronic human source management is become effective for the organization and they are developing their strategies, policies, procedures accordingly (Al Shobaki *et al*, 2017) [1, 3, 17]. It is obvious that organization are using the electronic human resource management system but it is also a fact that there is small amount of research is being conducted by the researchers about the Electronic HRM implementation and its results for employees and for the organizational operations as well (Stone and Dulebohn, 2013) [21, 22].

EHRM is not being taken as the research topic but there is high potential and scope for the researchers and organizations as well in order to consider it appropriately (Ruel *et al*, 2007; Bondarouk *et al*, 2017) [18, 6]. Therefore; it is necessary for the researcher to conduct researches on this area of subject to contribute for the improvement and growth of EHRM. It is also suggested that EHRM area of research is new and having its initial phase (Ruel *et al*, 2007) [18]. The research suggest that E-HRM is not being analyzed and utilized adequately by the academia therefore, it is not result oriented yet in the research and in practice as well (Strohmeier, 2007) [23, 24]. Further addition is being made regarding the use of EHRM approach but it is not filthy to accept easily because of incomplete results and information (Stone and Dulebohn, 2013) [21, 22]. Therefore, researcher of this paper is having an attempt to provide advance information regarding the electronic human resource management.

As far as the human resource employees are concern the Electronic Human Resource system and processes are new and essential area for the research.

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That is the reason; researcher is aiming to assess or analyze those factors that impact upon the adoption of EHRM on the employees of those organizations. This research study is based upon the model of Davis's Technology Acceptance. The next section of this paper is methodology and findings of the study.

Literature Review

The illustration of E-HRM is about the Virtual, Intranet, Web based technology, Computer based technology systems and other human resource practices and portals (Al Shobaki *et al*, 2017) [1, 3, 17]. E-HRM can be defined as the functional assistance to the human resource department with the help of internet in the organization (Voermans and Van Veldhoven, 2007; Naser *et al*, 2017) [27, 1, 3, 17]. E-HRM can also be discussed as the implementation of human resource policies, practices and strategies with the help of web based technology. The other definition of E-HRM is utilizing the computer system, electronic media and other communication network to meet the requirement of human resource department in the organization (Strohmeier, 2007) [23, 24].

Technological features are being analyzed in order to forecast and illustrate the use acceptance and adoption of the technology in their system. The user's attitude regarding the technology is being defined with the help of theory which is known as the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by the Fishbein and Ajzen generic theory. The said theory forecasts about the individual perspective and its attitude towards adoption of technology. The most prominent model is Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which is being extracted from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). TAM discuss about the individual intention about the usage of technology and its adoptability in the firm (Fred Davis, 1985). There are three variables that are important in the TAM: Perceived Usefulness (PU), Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) and Behavioral Intention to Use (BIU). Perceived usefulness is considered as the individual's perception regarding the impact of the system on the performance of the individual in the organization. Perceived ease of use is being considered that user did not require experts help or assistance to use the system. Behavior intention is begin considered as the user's application and attempt to perform a behavior. TAM suggests that there is influence of the external variables on the behavior which is being arbitrated with the help of user belief and attitudes. The TAM is being selected for this research because it is being tested and assists the validation, application and imitation (Schaup *et al*, 2010; Yusoff *et al*, 2010) [19, 28]. TAM is the most important model that is being used in order to forecast the user acceptance in regards of IS (Bueno and Salmeron, 2008) [7]. The TAM is having the forecasting feature which enables the researcher to use it for the different events in the research (Venkatesh, 2000) [25].

Conceptual Framework

The Trust is a kind of security about a new idea, technology that has impact upon the individual to adopt or accept the technology or system. Trust on the system such as EHRM that work through the help of internet can be adverse for the user to develop its trust on it in order to adopt or accept the EHRM system (Li, 2004). Attitude is considered as the users or individual affirmative or negative approach about

an idea or technology that support in the utility and adoption of the system (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011) [10].

Clarity of EHRM Goals: The objective of using the EHRM system is to use the technology into the prevailing system of the organization. Therefore, it is highly important and necessary for the organization to deliver the clear objectives or goals to the use so they will be able to take the right approach towards adopting the system or technology adequately. Perceived usefulness is the effective feature in adopting the EHRM in the organization. Human resource are highly intended about to know regarding the EHRM system increases the efficiency of their system especially the HR functions such as: cost cutting, management of time and operational effectiveness. Perceived usefulness is the important aspect in the TAM in view of the acceptance of computer technology attitude and its effectiveness is being realized in the adoption of the new technology. There is highly significance feature available regarding the perceived usefulness on the acceptance of technology (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000) [25]. Perceived ease of use considers as the complexity in learning, using and undertaking the technology. As far as the HR executives perceives about the EHRM that will require low level efforts to use the system and it will influence the individual behavior as well to adopt the EHRM. TAM suggests that Perceived ease of use will be effective in developing the intention of the individual towards adopting the technology. Intention to use is considered as the user will use the technology with the intention. User support is considered as the assistance is being provided on the technical grounds about the system to the users. User support is having the high success rate to making the implementation of the new technology in the organization (Igbaria *et al*, 1997) [11, 12]. In the organizational context; that user support in the EHRM system will be effective and important for the organization. There are two important features of TAM; PU and PEOU; that enable the researcher to consider the attitude of the user in regard with the effectiveness which are considered as the usefulness and usability. The acceptance of user in regards with the technology suggests that it is useful and effective which is being analyzed by producing cost reduction and producing efficiency (Barua *et al*, 1995) [5]. As far as PU is concern it is having is positive effect on the individual behavior towards the technology and supported by the different studies that have used the TAM (Moon *et al*, 2001) [15, 16]. It can be said that PU is having positive link with the behavior of the individual toward using and intention towards the using of new technology (Alotaibi, 2014) [2].

In the TAM model the second feature is PEOU. It is suggested that it is having the positive relation in regards with the user's attitude. In the later researches support this phenomenon that the perceived ease of use brings advantages to the organization such as reducing the cost of training and increasing efficiency through self learning (Barua *et al*, 1995) [5]. PEOU is having effect upon PU in positive relations and it is being tested in different researches as well such as; email, online banking and internet based shopping (Liao *et al*, 2016) [13]. It is argued by the researchers that individual attitude in using the new technology is having positive relation with the attitude intention to use and accept the technology (f *et al*, 2011). TAM is the most prominent used model in different researchers regarding the adoption and acceptance of the new technology. TAMS in different researches are being

used in order to identify about the acceptance of the new technology. In the early age of 90s the adoption of personal computer was tested by using the TAM model (Igbaria *et al*, 1997) [11, 12]. TAM is being used in different applications such as spreadsheets, word processing and also used as the tool or measure for adopting the route of website (Selim, 2003; Chau, 1996) [20, 8]. It is necessary for the researcher to use the other variables along with the TAM; one most of them are the impact of perceived ease in using the system and perceived usefulness of the system (Lou *et al*, 2000) [14]. It is evident that as the technology becomes advanced the adoption requires other factor to adopt it. Therefore, in this study; researcher has used other or external variables with the TAM in order to analyze the adoption of EHRM in University.

Research model and hypotheses
This research model is being designed in the context of acceptance and determines the change in behavior towards adopting the EHRM in Universities along with the impact of increases technical assistance and trust on EHRM in Universities. This model will enable the researcher to determine the impact of different features such as; ease of use, usefulness, trust and technical support on behavior towards the EHRM in Universities. The outside factors of the model are Technical support or assistance and trust. In this study; researcher is having the extensive feature of TAM model to be used. It is evident that technical supports are highly effective and helpful for the user to adopt the new technology without having any fear or danger in accessing the new technology. Along with this; trust will enable the individual to accept the new technology like the EHRM in Universities.
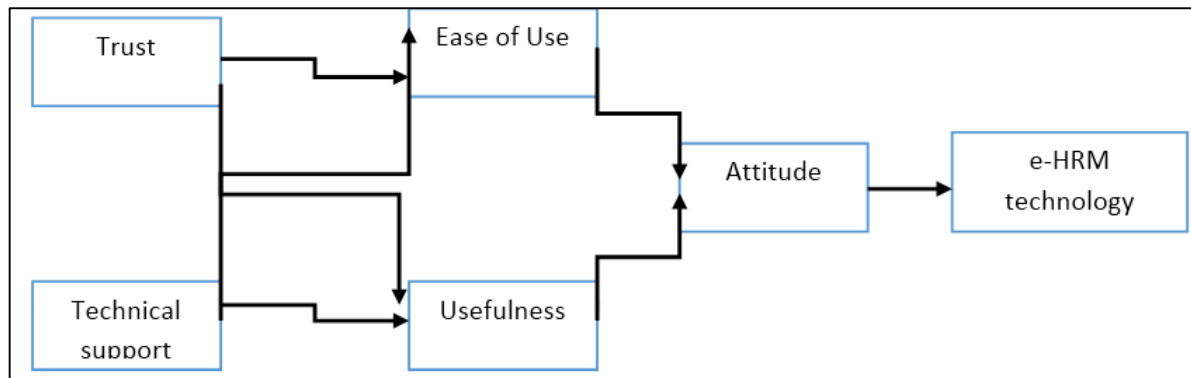

Fig 1: Research model

Technical support or assistance is being defined as the providing information and understanding about the new technology is being used by the user. Technical support usually depends upon the individual, utilizing of assets and procedures. This help can be provided through the helpdesk, online support and department of the IT. Technical support is considered as the main stream in realizing an individual to accept or adopt the new technology or system with the level of satisfaction. In the past studies suggested that technical assistance is the key to success in the organization because it reduces the fear factor among the individual of using the new technology without having any information or knowledge. The TAM model includes the three different relationships that are being tested and proved in the past researches that belief, attitude and behavior. There is not research is being conducted prior to this by using the TAM model in adoption of EHRM by the user's.
In this study, researcher will be analyzing the effect of Technical assistance or support and trust on PU and PEOU. Perceived ease of use about the technology is the perception of the individual that technology is easy to use for

performing the tasks. Perceived usefulness of the technology is considered by the user that technology will provide ease and effectiveness in their task performance.
It is suggested that the TAM model in relation with the PU and PEOU is having positive attitude of the individual to adopt the technology (Davis, 1989) [9]. Attitude measures the individual liking or disliking. It brings the impact with the positive influence in order to adopt or accept the technology (Davis, 1989) [9]. Attitude arbitrate the effect of perceive usefulness and perceived ease of use on the intention of the individual to adopt the new technology like EHRM.

Methodology
This study is quesntitive. A questionnaire was adopted from provious studies and destrbuted among the employyes in the universities. The sample of the study consist 288 employyes. Data will be analysis by usng SPSS software.

Results and Analysis
Demographic Analysis

Table 1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	160	55.6	55.6	55.6
	Female	128	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	288	100.0	100.0	
Age	18-25	54	18.8	18.8	18.8
	26-30	103	35.8	35.8	54.5
	31-40	95	33.0	33.0	87.5
	41-50	18	6.3	6.3	93.8
	Above 50	18	6.3	6.3	100.0

	Total	288	100.0	100.0	
Status	Single	143	49.7	49.7	49.7
	Married	145	50.3	50.3	100.0
	Total	288	100.0	100.0	
Education	Bachelors	136	47.2	47.2	47.2
	Masters	127	44.1	44.1	91.3
	PhD	25	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	288	100.0	100.0	

The above table depicts the demography of the respondents. If we look at the gender of the respondents it can be said that around 56% of the respondents were male while remaining 44% were female respondents. Most of the respondents were between the age of 26 and 40 having the percentage of around 68. While out of 288 respondents 36 were above the age of 40 and rest 54 were between 18 and 25 years of age. As far as the marital status of the respondents is concerned the married and single respondents were about the same 50%. While looking at the education of the respondents' one can say that most of the responde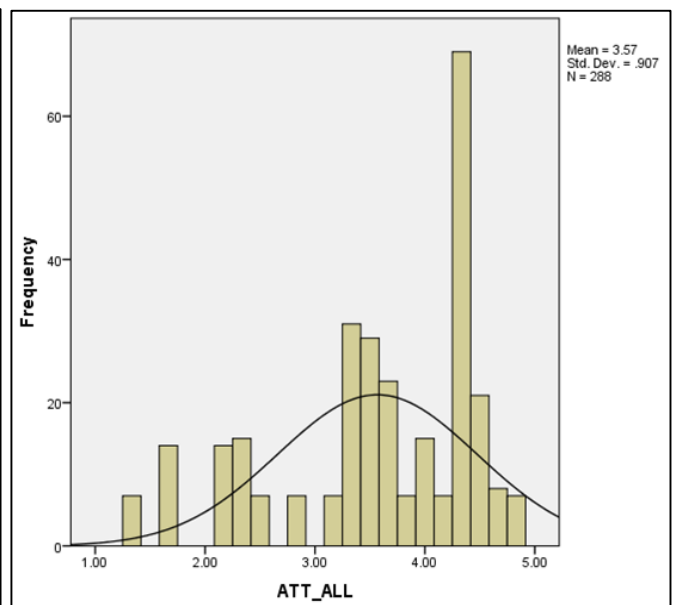nts were having bachelor degree being 47% of the total respondents while 44% were masters and remaining around 9% were PhD.

Moreover the following pie charts also graphically represent the frequencies of different categories in the shape of pies.
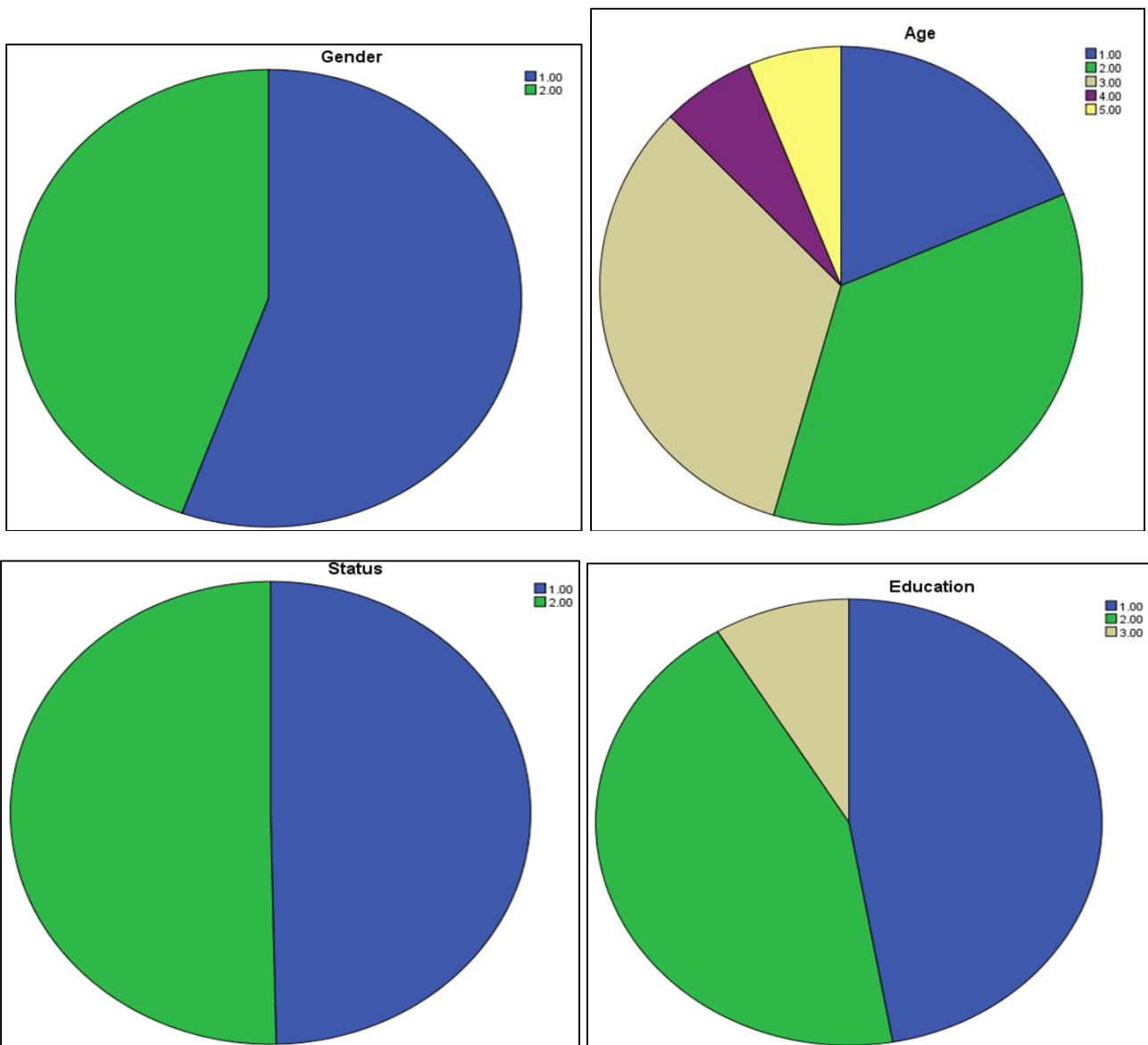
The following graphs of histogram show the distribution of the variables along with normal curve
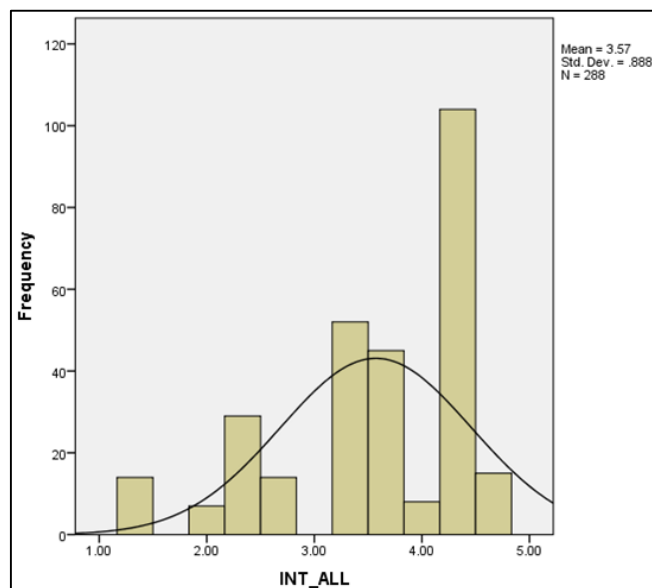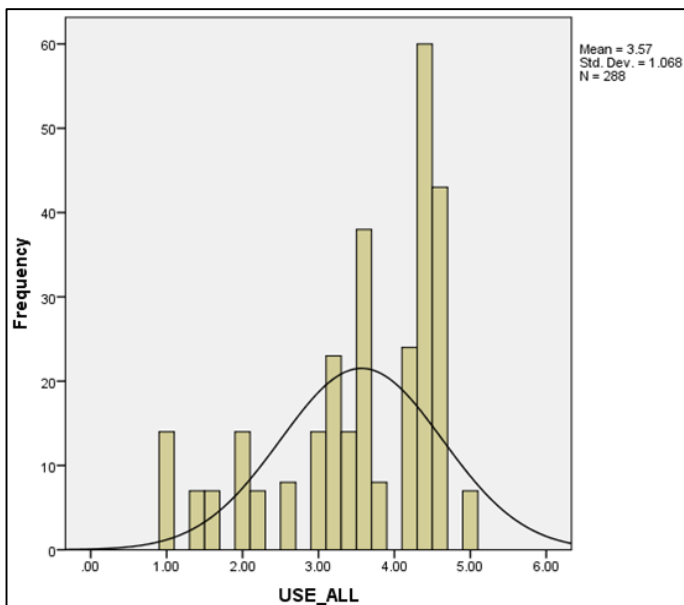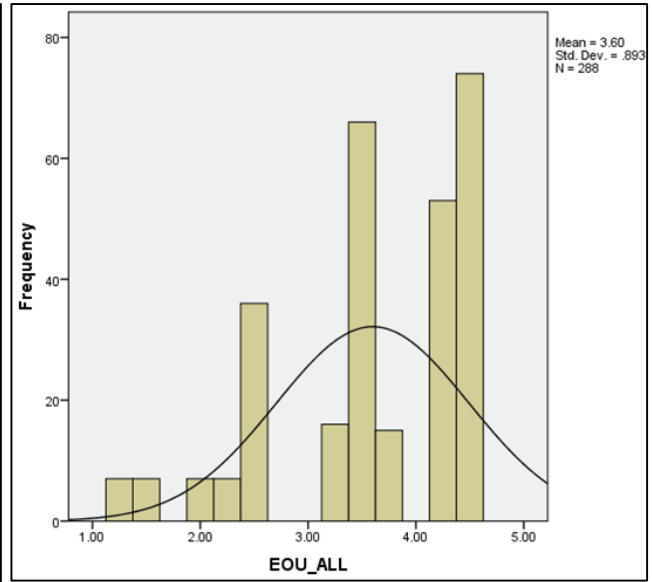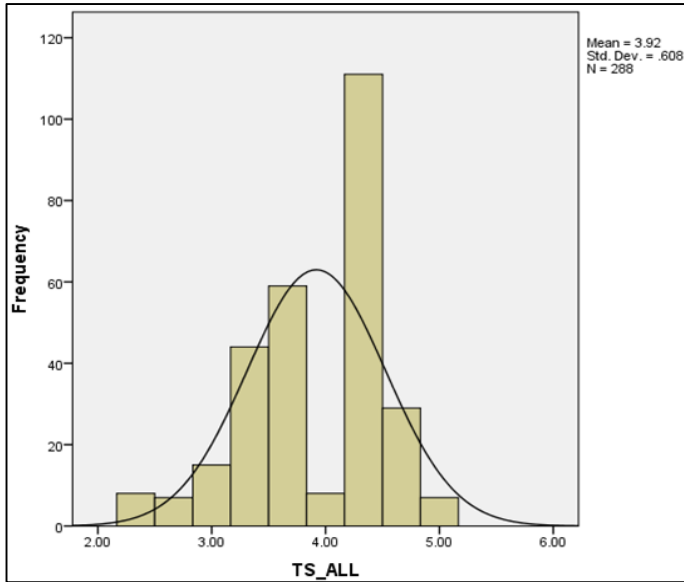
Correlation Analysis

This study has four regression in the whole conceptual framework and they are analyzed separately this section will define the correlations of the dependent and independent variables.

Model 1: Correlation of the

Table 2

Correlations		Technical Support	Trust	Ease of Use
Technical Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.260**	.451**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	288	288	288
Trust	Pearson Correlation	.260**	1	.731**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	288	288	288
Ease of Use	Pearson Correlation	.451**	.731**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	288	288	288
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

The above correlation table depicts that the trust and technical support are significantly correlated with Ease of use. Having the p-values of less than 0.05.

Model 2: Correlation of

Table 3

Correlations		Technical Support	Trust	Perceived Usefulness
Technical Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.260**	.242**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	288	288	288
Trust	Pearson Correlation	.260**	1	.467**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	288	288	288
Perceived Usefulness	Pearson Correlation	.242**	.467**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	288	288	288
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

The above correlation matrix shows that the correlation of Technical support and Trust with the dependent variables perceived usefulness is positive and significant with the p-value of less than 0.05.

Correlation of Model 3

Table 5

Correlations		Perceived usefulness	Ease of Use	Attitude towards E Hrm Adoption
Perceived usefulness	Pearson Correlation	1	.650**	.921**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	288	288	288
Ease of Use	Pearson Correlation	.650**	1	.875**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	288	288	288
Attitude toward E-Hrm Adoption	Pearson Correlation	.921**	.875**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	288	288	288
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

By looking at the above correlation table one can say that Ease of use and usefulness are positively and significantly correlated with attitude toward E-Hrm adoption.

Correlation of Model 4

Table 5

Correlations		Attitude toward adoption of e-hrm	Intention to adopt e-hrm
Attitude toward adoption of e-hrm	Pearson Correlation	1	.888**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	288	288
Intention to adopt e-hrm	Pearson Correlation	.888**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	288	288
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The above table of correlation shows that there is high correlation between the variables attitude toward adoption of E-Hrm and Intention to adopt E-Hrm. The p-value of 0.000 which less than 0.05 show that the correlation is significant.

Regression Analysis
The results of all four regression models are discussed in this section.

Regression Model 1:

Table 6

Model Summary				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.780[a]	.608	.605	.56140
a. Predictors: (Constant), TR_ALL, TS_ALL				

The table of model summary shows the value of R-square = 0.605 showing that the model explains 60.5% variation in the dependent variable showing the strength of the model.

Table 7

ANOVA[a]					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1 Regression	139.230	2	69.615	220.877	.000[b]
Residual	89.825	285	.315		
Total	229.055	287			
a. Dependent Variable: EOU_ALL					
b. Predictors: (Constant), TR_ALL, TS_ALL					

The annova table show the significant p-value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05 showing that the model is significant and over all the model is reliable.

Table 8

Coefficients[a]					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1 (Constant)	.087	.223		.389	.698
TS_ALL	.411	.056	.280	7.280	.000
TR_ALL	.543	.032	.659	17.145	.000
a. Dependent Variable: EOU_ALL					

The table of the coefficient shows that both of the independent variables have the significant impact on the Ease of use hence both the hypothesis related to the model are found to be supported.

Regression Model 2:

Table 9

Model Summary				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.484[a]	.234	.229	.93772
a. Predictors: (Constant), TR_ALL, TS_ALL				

The above table showing the summary of model 2 showing the value of 0.229 and showing around 30% of the variance in the model. However this value is bit lower however with two explanatory variables it is acceptable and more over the overall model shows the significant.

Table 10

ANOVA[a]					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1 Regression	76.514	2	38.257	43.508	.000[b]
Residual	250.606	285	.879		
Total	327.120	287			
a. Dependent Variable: USE_ALL					
b. Predictors: (Constant), TR_ALL, TS_ALL					

The above table of Annova regarding the model 2 shows the significance having the p-value less than 0.05 showing that the model is significant.

Table 11

Coefficients[a]					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1 (Constant)	1.181	.372		3.176	.002
TS_ALL	.227	.094	.129	2.407	.017
TR_ALL	.427	.053	.434	8.076	.000
a. Dependent Variable: USE_ALL					

The table of Coefficient shows that both independent variables say trust and technical support has the impact on the perceived usefulness and supporting the both hypotheses regarding the model.

Regression Model 3

Table 12

Model Summary			
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.990[a]	.981	.981	.12630
a. Predictors: (Constant), USE_ALL, EOU_ALL				

The model summary shows the high level of explanatory power having the 98% of the variance in attitude towards adoption of E- Hrm.

Table 13

ANOVAᵃ					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1 Regression	231.656	2	115.828	7261.615	.000[b]
Residual	4.546	285	.016		
Total	236.202	287			
a. Dependent Variable: ATT_ALL					
b. Predictors: (Constant), USE_ALL, EOU_ALL					

The Anova table shows that the overall significance of the model is acceptable having the value of 0.00 which much less than 0.05.

Table 14

Coefficientsᵃ					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1 (Constant)	-.031	.032		-.977	.329
EOU_ALL	.487	.011	.479	44.295	.000
USE_ALL	.518	.009	.609	56.340	.000
a. Dependent Variable: ATT_ALL					

The above table of coefficient regarding the model 3 shows that Ease of use and Usefulness have significant impact over attitude toward adoption of E-HRM.

Regression Model 4

Table 15

Model Summary			
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.888[a]	.788	.787	.40974
a. Predictors: (Constant), ATT_ALL				

The above table of model summary shows the value of R square = 0.788 showing that 79% of the variance is explained in the dependent variable by the independent variable.

Table 16

ANOVAᵃ					
Model	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1 Regression	178.501	1	178.501	1063.225	.000[b]
Residual	48.016	286	.168		
Total	226.517	287			
a. Dependent Variable: INT_ALL					
b. Predictors: (Constant), ATT_ALL					

The Anova table shows the significant value of probability showing the model is significant.

Table 17

Coefficientsᵃ					
Model	**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1 (Constant)	.471	.098		4.798	.000
ATT_ALL	.869	.027	.888	32.607	.000
a. Dependent Variable: INT_ALL					

The above coefficient table shows that there is a significant impact of Attitude toward adopting E-HRM on Intention to use E-HRM.

Discussion

The topic of E-HRM is certainly not becoming obsolete, and its full potential is still anticipated (Ruel *et al*., 2007) [18], and therefore academic involvement in the topic needs to grow. Ruel *et al*. (2007) [18] further stressed that research on E-HRM is still in its "youth-phase". In a similar vein, Strohmeier (2007) [23, 24] surmised that research on E-HRM stems from several disciplines and is scattered throughout numerous journals and since initial reviews are not encompassing, the results of these studies remain unclear at present. In addition, Stone & Dulebohn (2013) [21, 22] also highlighted that despite the widespread use of EHRM systems, little research has focused on such issues as the degree to which they are accepted by users. Consequently, in this paper, we try to contribute to advancing the E-HRM research area.

It can be stated that the acceptance of the use of HRM information technology and systems by HR employees is a new and important research field. Therefore the purpose of the present study is to identify and investigate the factors that could be effect on the adoption of electronic human resource management by employees who working in the universties. The paper based on Davis's Technology Acceptance Model next section research methodology and findings were presented.

This model is designed to explain the acceptance and change in attitudes towards cloud computing with an effect of enhanced technical support on cloud computing.

The model examined the impact and effects of different factors like ease of use, usefulness and technological support on intention to use E-HRM and attitude towards adopting E-HRM. External variable used in this study is technical support. In our study it has been studied alongside TAM model, creating an extended version of TAM model. It is noticed that Technical support helps in creating better awareness and reduces the fear of change in any technological adoption or change.

The hypotheses of the study are shown in a summary table of hypotheses.

Summary of Hypotheses

Table 8

Hypotheses	P-Value	Result
H1a: There is a significant impact of technical support on Ease of use.	0.00	Supported
H1b: There is a significant impact of trust on Ease of use.	0.00	Supported
H2a: There is a significant impact of technical support on Perceived Usefulness.	0.02	Supported
H2b: There is a significant impact of trust on Perceived Usefulness.	0.00	Supported
H3a: There is a significant impact of ease of use on attitude towards adopting E-HRM.	0.00	Supported
H3b: There is a significant impact of Perceived usefulness on attitude towards adopting E-HRM.	0.00	Supported
H4: There is a significant impact of Attitude towards adopting E-HRM on Intention to Use E-HRM.	0.00	Supported

The above table of the hypotheses shows that all the hypotheses are supported with the literature hence the literature is present as under.

User Support deals with the technical support and help given to users in terms of operating the information systems in the organization. The importance of user support to the success of user computing has been highlighted in many studies (Amoroso, 1988; Amoroso and Cheney, 1991; Igbaria *et al*. 1997) [11, 12]. In the working environment, we believe that technical support to users of the E-HRM system is crucial.

The trust (in this study is E-HRM Trust), security or the level of privacy a new technology or a new idea provides is a significant factor influencing the behavioral intent to adopt a system (Lu *et al*., 2005). Trust level of a system especially systems like EHRM that are based on the Internet, could enkindle or destroy the trust a user has for that technology, and invariably alter the intent to adopt E-HRM technology.

The argument that PU has a positive impact on the attitude towards emerging technologies and the behavioral intention to actually use that technology has been supported by findings of many researches related to TAM. (Atkinson *et al*., 1997; Moon *et al*., 2001) [4, 15, 16]. It is safe to say that PU has a positive relation with attitudes of users towards usage as well as behavioral intention to use any new technology (Mutlaq. Alotaibi, 2014) [2].

Second component of TAM model is PEOU. It is argued that it is positively related with the attitudes of users (Davis, 1989) [9]. This argument was later supported by research as it was noticed that the lower complexity of a technology and its use results in lowering the costs of learning and operations and thus giving more value to technology (Barua *et al*. 1995) [5].

Conclusion

The above discussion shows that there are four regression model used in this study and the result showed that all four model are significant and the coefficients of all independent variables have the significant and positive impact on the dependent variables. Hence confirming all the variables to supported and are aligned with literature. The literature shows that the all seven variables posited in the study are significant and supported hence the E-HRM adoption is condition with the attitude towards adopting E-HRM and that is affected by the perceived ease of use and usefulness. Moreover the external factors such as trust and technical support have the impact over both of the variables found in TAM such as Ease of use and Usefulness.

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